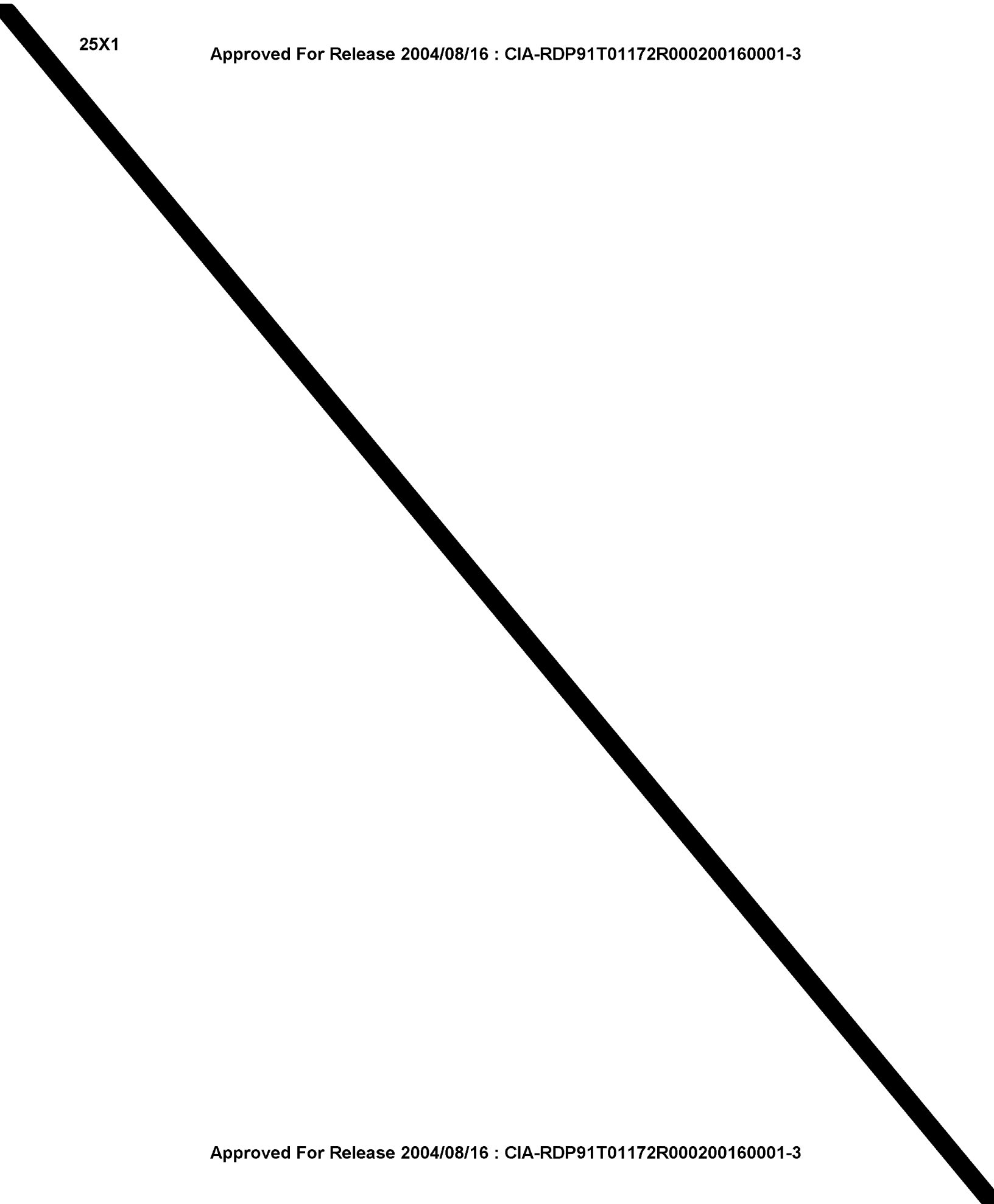

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THE REVERSAL OF THE DOCTORS' PLOT and ITS IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH

IMPLICATIONS OF REVERSAL

On 4 April, the much publicized doctors' plot was repudiated in a startling public reversal. Pravda reported that an investigation committee especially set up for the purpose by the newly-merged USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) under L. P. Beria had found that officials of the ex-Ministry of State Security (MGB) had used "illegal methods" to extract false confessions from the accused doctors.

The announcement came at a time when the vigilance campaign, which the doctors' plot had touched off, had ground to a halt in the wake of the sweeping amnesty decree promulgated by the new regime on 27 March, and at a time when the Communist propaganda machine was engaged in an all-out peace offensive. The arrested doctors were said to have been incorrectly accused "without any legal bases whatsoever," and hence they had been released and completely exonerated. The guilty police officials of the investigations section of the former MGB had been arrested. A second brief anouncement made by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet on the same day stated that the decree of 20 January awarding the Order of Lenin to Lydia Timashuk, the informer in the doctors' plot, had been repealed as incorrect.

The Pravda announcement contained several extremely interesting points. The number of accused doctors had been increased from the nine named in January to fifteen; and, of the six names added, none were Jewish, clearly implying that the original doctors' plot expose had carried anti-Semitic overtones. Furthermore, the announcement came so suddenly that an article in the March issue of Young Communist, which was distributed on the very day of the reversal, strongly attacked foreign espionage, especially American, and called for vigilance against foreign penetration in the same violent language that had been characteristic of the vigilance campaign; it praised Lydia Timashuk as an outstanding example of revolutionary vigilance. It is interesting to note that the listing of the released doctors did not include two of the original nine, M. B. Kogan and Y. G. Etinger. Kogan was believed to have died in 1951 and hence had probably never been arrested, while Etinger, according to the US Embassy in Moscow, was rumored to have died during incarceration.

The announcement, of course, centered attention on Beria. It was made under the auspices of the Ministry (MVD) he had so recently

inherited. Furthermore, Pravda's main editorial on the reversal, in an almost exact repetition of a statement contained in Beria's funeral speech, promised that the government would respect the constitutional rights of Soviet citizens. This statement in Beria's speech is the only known allusion in the recent past to the Government's regard for the constitutional rights of its citizens, a fact that is particularly interesting, since Soviet domestic propaganda generally avoids all reference to the individual and his rights and generally treats the constitution as a symbol of the power of the State or a guarantee of material benefits. Thus, the Pravda editorial appeared to indicate that Beria had been a prime motivating force in the release of the doctors, and to imply that he had been considering this move at the time of the funeral.1/ Beria's role in the reversal was further suggested by a UP dispatch cleared by the Moscow censors on 7 April attributing the release of the doctors "to the personal intervention of Deputy Premier L. P. Beria as soon as he took over the newly-combined Ministry of State Security and Internal Affairs."

The American Embassy in Moscow commented that the reversal provided concrete evidence of the new regime's break with the old, since Stalin had either fully approved of, or personally engineered, the "revelation" of the plot. The embassy added that this disclosure indicated that some high-level controversy existed or had recently been concluded in the Soviet Union, but suggested that recent events indicated Malenkov and Beria were operating harmoniously. 25X1

On 6 April Pravda levied a critical attack against S. D. Ignatiev, identifying him as being the responsible MGB minister at the time of the arrest of the doctors. On the following day the Central Committee met in plenary session and removed Ignatiev from his post as Party Secretary, in which he had been confirmed as recently as 20 March, when the results of the Central Committee meeting of 14 March (which had rearranged the Secretariat) were finally published. He was thus removed less than three weeks after he was publicly confirmed in the post.

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1/ Malenkov, on the other hand, in his funeral speech mentioned the necessity of continuing the vigilance campaign maintaining that it was necessary to train the Soviet people in "a spirit of high political vigilance" to be directed against "internal and external enemies."

The US Embassy in Moscow commented that the 7 April meeting removing Ignatiev may have afforded an opportunity to Central Committee members, possibly for the first time, to discuss the background of the plot affair. The embassy further observed that Beria, as a member of a minority race himself, might presumably be identified with the policy of racial equality which began with the reversal of the charges against the doctors. In the embassy's opinion, this new policy might have been a reflection on Malenkov, who was rumored to be personally anti-Semitic (Malenkov's alleged anti-Semitism, often rumored, remains unconfirmed).

On 10 April Izvestia promised its readers that persons found guilty of falsely accusing the fifteen Soviet doctors and attempting to foment racial prejudice in the Soviet Union would be justly punished. This had its conclusion on 22 May when N. N. Vasilev, Minister of State Control of the RSFSR, stated that the Soviet Government had punished such guilty officials as Ryumin, the former Deputy Minister of State Security, who was accused of helping to fabricate the doctors' plot. The nature of the punishment was not revealed. This announcement was extremely unusual, in that it was made not by the Security Ministry itself but by a Republican minister of the Ministry of State Control.

On the same day, the Soviet press criticized officials of the Georgian Republic and, in what appeared to be a veiled attack on Stalin, sharply criticized those who resort to "one-man rule" as opposed to "internal party democracy"; it added that no man possessed the knowledge and capabilities of collective leadership. On 8 May the leading editorial of the Georgian newspaper, Zarya Vostoka, linked Ryumin with Rukhadze, a former Georgian MGB Minister who was currently being accused of fabricating the charges in the 1951-52 purges in Georgia. The editorial charged that Ryumin, as well as Rukhadze, had fabricated the evidence against the Georgian leaders in this earlier purge, and accused Rukhadze of "trying to arouse discontent among the Soviet peoples" and of attempting to "stir up feelings of racial hatred."

The doctors' plot reversal also served, at least temporarily, to bring what was left of the vigilance campaign to a close [redacted] 25X1 25X1D [redacted] 25X1D The doctors' plot reversal also suggested that Soviet relations with Israel might be improved, 25X1C [redacted] 25X1C

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In summary, then, the whole reversal procedure looked like a bid on the part of Beria and at least some of the other Soviet leaders to ingratiate themselves with the Soviet people. In addition, Beria was probably anxious to remove the dread stigma attached to his name throughout the Soviet Union by virtue of his connections with the police. The reversal may likewise have prefaced a complete house-cleaning of any old MGB leaders who might have switched allegiance from Beria to Ignatiev when the latter moved into the MGB in August 1951 under the direction of Stalin and probably Malenkov as well.

GOVERNMENTAL REORGANIZATION IN REGIONAL REPUBLICS

The exoneration of the Moscow doctors was followed shortly by a complete reorganization of the Georgian Party and Government apparatus, which reversed the purge that had occurred in that area during 1951 and 1952. When the new Chairman of the Council of Ministers in Georgia, V. M. Bakradze, presented the new government, he stated that all its members were from the Georgian Party organization, formerly led by "the best son of Georgia, the intelligent pupil of Lenin, the comrade of Stalin, the illustrious official of the Communist Party in the great Soviet Government -- Comrade Beria." He declared that three of the new members of the Georgian Council of Ministers had been falsely charged and arrested in the fall of 1951 in the case fabricated by the former MGB Chief in Georgia, Rukhadze. Two former First Secretaries of the Georgian Party, Charkviani and Mgeladze, had not only failed critically to examine Rukhadze's fabrications, but had even abetted them. Bakradze indicated that directives from "All-Union" organs had freed the three innocent officials as well as others who had been implicated and, as a

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demonstration of their rehabilitation, Bakradze had included them in the new Council of Ministers.

One of the most notable aspects of this Georgian reorganization was the appointment of V. G. Dekanozov as Minister of the MVD. Dekanozov had been the Soviet Ambassador in Berlin at the time of Germany's attack on the USSR. He was at one time Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, and after the war he served as Deputy Chief of the Directorate of Soviet Property Abroad. This Directorate, under V. N. Merkulov, had charge of Soviet assets in Germany and the European Satellites. Prior to entering the Foreign Ministry Dekanozov, a Georgian, had long been associated with Beria, particularly in the period from 1929 to 1935 in the Georgian security apparatus.

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In 1951 and 1952 the Georgian political leadership had been publicly criticized for corruption and for encouraging local rather than national patriotism. Beria himself had attended the Georgian Party meeting on 1 April 1952, which had marked the high point of the purges and which had replaced among others the top Party Secretary. The changes made appeared to reflect on the position of Beria, who had long been considered to have, along with Stalin, a personal interest and responsibility for Georgian affairs.

The undoing of the earlier Georgian purge provided a further reason for questioning Malenkov's role: if he, under Stalin (as is thought probable), played a part in these earlier developments in Georgia, then the current exoneration of Beria's men was another indication of Malenkov's lack of control. The picture, however, was far from complete. Some top Georgian Party officials who [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted] appear to be long-time Beria associates, were still numbered among the ranks of those purged. Further, the Georgian Party Congress originally scheduled for 26 May had not been held as of early July. Its convocation had been announced on 14 April at the time of the Georgian Party and Government reorganization and presumably it was scheduled to confirm the changes which had taken place in the Party apparatus. In spite of these inconsistencies, however, it appeared certain that Beria had played a major role in the reversal, particularly since Bakradze had referred only to him in his discussion of the government reorganization and had not mentioned Malenkov once. This pattern, with one curious exception when Malenkov was singled out for attention, was to be followed in the Georgian press, which extolled Beria in extremely flowery terms.

The pattern of Beria worship in the Transcaucasus was far from complete, however. An opposite cult was noted in Azerbaijan where Bagirov, the newly-named Premier, told the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet that the people would rally around Malenkov, "the closest comrade of Stalin." Bagirov's procedure in assuming the Azerbaijan Premiership resembled that followed by Malenkov in the central government in that Bagirov also relinquished his position on the Party Secretariat upon assuming the office of Premier. This unusual procedure of two new regional premiers picking two different Soviet leaders as their patrons added to the mounting indications that the Soviet leadership was indeed collegial in form. It indicated that the regional participants were either choosing the leader they would like most to be identified with at that time or standing by their previous patrons on the grounds that it would be foolhardy to abandon them at this late date.

Bagirov, who had aligned himself with Malenkov, had had an earlier association with Beria and in fact at one time had been Beria's superior in police affairs in Azerbaijan. In his history of Transcaucasian Party affairs, however, he had failed to glorify Beria, suggesting that his relations with him were not too favorable. Bagirov had been accorded unusual recognition in the Party reorganization of 6 March when he was moved ahead of twenty-two members of the ex-Party Presidium to become an alternate member of the new Party Presidium. Bagirov had also long been a vocal advocate of Stalin's Russification policy, which at the time of his appointment as Azerbaijani Premier appeared to have been at least temporarily shelved.

INTERNAL MEASURES TO EASE TENSION

While the regional republics were setting their houses in order in reorganizations patterned after the All-Union model, the Central Government was enacting measures designed to ease internal tensions and to popularize itself with the Soviet people:

1. On 27 March the amnesty decree was issued.

2. On 1 April the annual decree on price cuts announced the largest reductions made in four years.

3. April and May messages provided indications that production of consumer goods was being increased.

4. The 1953 announcement of the annual State loan was delayed until late June and the loan itself was only half as large as those of 1951 and 1952.

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5. On 18 May, wheat flour was placed on daily sale in Moscow State stores, ending the four-day-a-year sale system in practice since World War II. On the same day in an unprecedented step, the Government announced a bargain clearance sale with twenty-five percent price cuts for the remainder of May and June in State stores.

The American Embassy in Moscow noted that the local population showed a lively interest in the amnesty decree, which the Embassy assumed would affect directly more than two million people. It commented that the absence of any reference to Stalin in Soviet news coverage was apparently designed to give the new regime full credit for the amnesty. The wording of this decree, which had preceded the doctors' plot reversal by about seven days, contrasted sharply with previous emphasis on the need for internal security.

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The consumer goods price reductions which went into effect on 1 April were the most extensive since those of 1 May 1950. The list of price cuts also included a number of manufactured items on which prices had not been reduced in recent years. The greatest cut however was the fifty percent reduction in the price of fresh fruits and vegetables.

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The Soviet announcement of the 1953 State loan was not made until late June. [redacted]

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25X1 [redacted] The announcement, when finally made, called for a State loan only half as large as those of 1951 and 1952. This suggested that the regime had gone even further than previously indicated in shifting resources from heavy industry production to consumer goods, since the loan is as much a means of limiting consumer purchasing power as of obtaining funds for "development" of the national economy.

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As though anticipating the possibility that the retail price cuts might signify the end of the farmers' market, a Pravda editorial of 6 June entitled "Soviet Trade" reassured Russia's peasantry that such would not be the case. In the editorial numerous writers were criticized for having been solely or mainly preoccupied with the transition to a moneyless economic system based on the exchange of products and for having therefore neglected the vital problems of trade in its present form. This, said the editorial, "means an underestimate, which in theory is wrong and in practice harmful, of the enormous role trade plays in Soviet economy." The Government and Party would "in the coming historical period" continue to develop trade -- that is to say, exchange based on money. This editorial is of further significance in that those criticized were, after all, only elaborating the propositions offered by Stalin in the Economic Problems of Socialism.

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EXTERNAL MEASURES TO REDUCE TENSION

The policy of reducing tension at home had its counterpart in the field of foreign affairs. After Stalin's death, the two plane incidents of the 12th and 15th of March had caused a considerable increase in international tension. On 21 March came the first indication that the propaganda line had switched. On this date, Soviet media resumed normal coverage of internal and external news, understandably lacking in the period following Stalin's death. When this occurred, it was noted that articles on foreign affairs resumed anti-US charges, but with considerable restraint. A 21 March commentary on the possibility of peaceful coexistence of capitalism and socialism recalled the "vigorous cooperation" of the US, UK and USSR during World War II and the "splendid results" of that cooperation in the common victory over the enemy. Previously Soviet propaganda had insisted that the Red Army had won the World War II victory singlehanded.

Another instance of what was to become a concerted Soviet drive to reduce international tension was seen on 25 March when the USSR granted visas to ten US newspaper and radio editors to visit Moscow for one week.

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On 28 March the Chinese accepted General Clark's offer of 22 February to exchange sick and wounded POW's and suggested resumption of the truce talks. Two days later Chou En-lai proposed the repatriation of all prisoners desiring to be released, with the disposition of the remainder to be decided by neutral states.

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On 31 March Vyshinsky expressed hope in the Security Council that the current UN session would promote further useful results which could strengthen friendly relations with all nations.

These late March moves were followed by a series of Soviet efforts to get on friendlier terms with the West, which appeared to occur in discernible phases. From late March until late April, Soviet policy was characterized principally by an attempt to ease tensions with the West at the least possible cost to the USSR. This involved improved personal relations with Western diplomats, some relaxation of the previously vigorous internal Soviet security measures, moderation of language in Soviet speeches and official statements, and release of some Western civilians interned in Korea. These changes reflected primarily a relaxation in

the previously extreme Soviet behavior in these matters, rather than any sort of basic change in Soviet foreign policy and, as many outside observers were to remark, it seemed as though Soviet leaders had decided to reduce the international tension by "ten degrees" or so. The quantitative scope of these demonstrations of friendliness suggested that a formal directive had gone out, presumably through foreign ministry channels.

In mid-April the foreign policy initiative passed to the United States with President Eisenhower's 16 April speech. The extremely favorable reception with which the world greeted this US policy declaration had the effect of throwing the burden for further peace moves on the Soviet Union On 25 April Soviet leaders answered the President's speech in a Pravda article, which did not actually reveal any basic change in Soviet foreign policy. Both Ambassador Bohlen and the British Foreign Office noted that the reply betrayed a certain amount of indecision and uncertainty on the part of its authors. Ambassador Bohlen also noted that the article's length and its rather unsettled reasoning precluded its becoming an effective propaganda vehicle. Analysis of subsequent Soviet propaganda revealed that, while Pravda's reply was widely broadcast within the USSR, it was not treated as an instrument of propaganda.

The first positive, coordinated inter-Orbit move designed to recapture the propaganda initiative for the USSR was Molotov's response to the Five Power Peace Pact proposal made by the Paris Commission of the WPC on 27 April. On the same day, the Bulgarian Presidium endorsed the proposal, as did Chinese Foreign Minister Chou En-lai on the 28th. This was followed by general Satellite approval. Curiously enough, the full meeting of the WPC, which occurred in mid-June in Budapest, played down the Five Power Peace Pact theme. Pierre Cot, in one of the last speeches at the Congress, explained this action by saying that the Five Power Peace Pact had not been abandoned, but that the Congress did not want to place obstacles in the way of any negotiations among any group of powers.

Beginning in late April, Soviet tactics began to reflect a shift toward the use of diplomacy as the principal means of lowering the international temperature. In relations with individual countries that had previously been targets of propaganda, vilification and diplomatic threats, the USSR began to display a more conciliatory attitude. This was followed eventually by a retreat on the diplomatic level from some long standing Soviet positions. Two examples which might be used to portray this development are Yugoslavia and Turkey. On 30 April, for the first time since 1948, Foreign Minister Molotov received the Yugoslav Charge in Moscow. On 9 June Molotov told the charge that the USSR intended to raise the status of its diplomatic representation in Belgrade

to ambassadorial level and hoped that Yugoslavia would reciprocate. This overture on Molotov's part was subsequently realized. Another example of the new tactic was the 30 May Soviet note to Turkey, in which the USSR expressed optimism over the possibility of finding a mutually acceptable solution to the Dardanelles question and abandoned its "territorial claims against Turkey."

The record of such recent developments in Soviet foreign policy has been widely covered elsewhere and it is not thought advisable to record these events chronologically in this paper. The decision to reduce international tension was undoubtedly approved by the new Soviet leaders before being put into operation by Molotov in his role as custodian of Soviet foreign affairs. He had been publicly identified with this approach since 1 April, when he endorsed Chou En-lai's POW concession, although at that time Molotov insisted that the Communist stand on repatriation was still firm. While Stalin's Bolshevik article had contained the necessary theoretical justification for these maneuvers and while various foreign Communists attributed them to the article, their timing made it difficult to escape the conclusion that they had been brought about as a result of Stalin's death.

The USSR, up to Stalin's death and in the period immediately following, had lapsed into a rigid position, a sort of go-it-alone policy with regard to international relations in which the atmosphere of compromise, reconciliation and negotiation was completely absent. Thus, in addition to the conclusion that these preliminary moves were made to keep the international situation fluid and to promote a period of international relaxation while problems of Soviet leadership were thrashed out at home, they suggest that with Stalin's passing a more realistic and perhaps more effective Soviet foreign policy was to come into play. Such a policy may well have been in the minds of the majority of Soviet leaders, but ruled out by Stalin in the last years of his life.

Korea has been the only real concession to date. The compromise agreement at Panmunjom on 8 June represented a Communist retreat from a position which had been proclaimed domestically and internationally as final. The relevance of this compromise to the policy change in the USSR was, of course, obscured by Chinese involvement in the issue and the problem of Sino-Soviet relations in the period following Stalin's death.

In summary, there have been no outward signs that the new atmosphere of detente was unacceptable to a portion of the Soviet leadership, or that it had in fact entered into a struggle for leadership. The reduction of international tension would seem to be a policy attractive to all Soviet contenders in their bids for internal power.

In the background, of course, the possibility always remained that some leader would use the international arena to solidify his position with the Soviet masses. In this respect, Molotov would appear to have the advantage.

The foreign policy problem, however, was at a later date to become much more acute with respect to the delicate question of Germany. At this point, over-all Soviet foreign policy, policy toward the Satellites, jurisdictional control in Germany, and individual personalities exercising the control were to merge in the first big test of the new regime. Meanwhile, however, there were more internal developments affecting the general pattern of the Soviet leadership.

MAY DAY SLOGANS AS BAROMETER OF POLICY

The May Day slogans published on 21 April represented a considerable change from those issued for the 7 November 1952 anniversary. There was increased emphasis on "peaceful coexistence." In addition, Soviet workers were called on to strengthen the "fraternal friendship among peoples of our country" and "increasingly to strengthen the unity of the great Soviet many-peopled State," in what appeared to be an allusion to the doctors' plot reversal. One novel slogan affirmed that the "rights of Soviet citizens, guaranteed by our Constitution, are unshakable and are defended as sacred by the Soviet Government." This was another repetition of Beria's remarks on this subject at Stalin's funeral. Another slogan admonished employees of State institutions strictly to observe "socialist legality and take a sensitive attitude towards workers' inquiries." Finally, the de-emphasis of Stalin was continued. His name occurred only twice in the slogans.

The constitution was referred to as the Soviet Constitution rather than the Stalin Constitution and the Komsomol, instead of being the "Lenin-Stalin Komsomol," was now called the "All-Union Lenin Communist Union of Youth." This was in contrast to the pattern in Czechoslovakia, for example, where one slogan used the name of the recently-deceased Gottwald ten times, referring to the "Gottwald Five-Year Plan," and so on.

Malenkov, unlike Zapotocky in Czechoslovakia, was not mentioned in the slogans, nor for that matter were Beria and Molotov. However, quotations from both Beria and Malenkov were employed. The avoidance of names of both past and present leaders, together with the new emphasis on unity of the people, the Party and the Government, reinforced the current Soviet propaganda line that the USSR was experiencing rule of the Party by its leaders acting jointly rather than rule of an individual.

German and Czech slogans, which were issued before Soviet slogans, greeted Malenkov by name as did slogans in Albania, Viet Nam and North Korea. In Rumania, one of the slogans was a direct quotation from Malenkov's funeral speech. The Hungarian and Polish slogans, issued after the USSR's, failed to mention Malenkov and, in Poland, the slogan dealing with the constitution appeared to be modified in conformity with Beria's statement on the subject.

In the Satellites in general, and Poland and Hungary in particular, Malenkov received no unusual prominence. In Warsaw pictures of Prime Minister Bierut predominated, with those of Stalin in second place. In Budapest the usual triumvirate of Lenin, Stalin and Rakosi was played up and Malenkov's picture was actually seen on only three buildings.

25X1C In China [redacted] 25X1C the groups passing the reviewing stand were urged to cheer Mao Tse-tung and no one else, and that images of Mao were particularly prominent, whereas portraits of Malenkov were featured only in the company of other foreign Communist leaders and were generally given second rank behind the Chinese. The 55 slogans issued by Peiping for use on May Day did not mention the Soviet Premier, and Mao Tse-tung replaced Stalin in the place of honor in Chinese propaganda.

The key address in the Soviet Union on 1 May, which was made by Bulganin, was in the vein of the Pravda reply to President Eisenhower. While the language was far less bellicose than usual, Bulganin asked for Western "deeds" to match the "peaceful statements" of its leaders. In published listings of the Presidium, Malenkov was in first place, followed by Beria, Molotov, Voroshilov, Khrushchev, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Saburov and Pervukhin.

READJUSTMENTS REFLECTING PECULIAR NATURE OF SOVIET LEADERSHIP

Meanwhile, a series of disconnected and in some cases inexplicable developments occurred, which were of interest because of their bearing on the Soviet leadership and the policy of that leadership. Cumulatively, they suggested that a delicate balance was being maintained as the triumvirate moved their human chess players across the board.

1. On 11 April, G. M. Orlov was awarded the Order of Lenin on his 50th anniversary. The practice of making this award to deserving Soviet leaders at this stage in their careers is not unusual. However, [redacted] 25X1C the award to Orlov recalled the surprise which his retention in the new Soviet Gorvernment as Minister of the Timber and Paper Industry had caused. Orlov [redacted] 25X1C had been one of the most

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contested individuals in the former Council of Ministers and, on 12 February, had suffered a new wave of criticism for inefficiency in his ministry. Orlov was a former NKVD official who had at one

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2. On 19 April, Soviet newspapers announced the appointment of First Deputy Foreign Minister Y. A. Malik as Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain. In effect, he changed places with A. A. Gromyko, the incumbent ambassador in London, who now became a First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. The significance of this shift was unknown, but it was an unusual one since it evidently was another of those appointments not contemplated at the time of the 6 March reorganization. It suggested that second echelon personnel were beginning to be moved around in connection with the intricacies of collective leadership, and that the original reorganization of the government was far from final as the components of the triumvirate moved to solidify their positions.

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5. On 29 April, the appointment of I. A. Benediktov as Soviet Ambassador to India was announced. Benediktov had little background in foreign affairs, his experience having been almost completely in the field of agriculture. He had served agriculture in various positions since 1938, when he had been appointed People's Commissar of Collective Farms. In 1946 he had been appointed Minister of Agriculture. During the 19th Party Congress, when he was re-elected a full member of the Central Committee, he was subjected to some criticism for various failures by his ministry. In March he had lost his ministerial appointment when the newly-merged Ministry of Agriculture and Procurement had been placed under the leadership of the relatively obscure central apparatus functionary, A. I. Kozlov. The Benediktov ambassadorial appointment was the second example of a man with no foreign office experience receiving an important diplomatic post. The first had been V. V. Kuznetsov (appointed ambassador to China on 10 March) who, by virtue of certain aspects of his career and primarily his WFTU connections, was thought to be connected with Malenkov. Benediktov's association in agriculture must have thrown him into association with Malenkov also, but perhaps this may not have been a pleasant one due to the peculiar role of the Party in agricultural affairs. Benediktov had also been associated with A. A. Andreev as his first assistant during the war. Lastly and perhaps most curiously, Benediktov, who various sources agreed was a good administrator,

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to be particularly friendly with Molotov.

6. On 1 May Bulganin reviewed the May Day parade. This coupled with the fact that he had represented the Soviet Union at Gottwald's funeral suggested that he was being used as a non-partisan representative of the Soviet leadership.

7. On 6 May, a Pravda editorial entitled "Improve the Economic Indices in the Work of Enterprises" stated that "the reorganization of administrative machinery and particularly the enlargement of ministries and the considerable enlargement of ministers' powers are helping to raise the level of guidance of all economic activity . . . and to institute more flexible and effective planning of production." Although the editorial went on to depict the continuing role of the Party in focusing its attention on improving the economic activity of various enterprises, it clearly implied that the powers of Government officials had been strengthened. An

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earlier Pravda article of 27 April also had pointed out that the wider authority of the ministers was aimed at bringing a closer rapprochement between the State apparatus and the people.

8. On 17 May, a Soviet regional broadcast announced that the Kazak Republic Publishing House had issued in Kazakh the second edition of the brochure on Beria's address at the 19th Party Congress of the Communist Party and stated that 50,000 copies had already been published. This is the only known Soviet broadcast referring to this type of subject since Stalin's death.

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10. On 2 June the British Ambassador to the USSR held a reception to mark the Queen's Coronation. All the leading Soviet leaders including Malenkov had been invited to attend. Molotov, however, was the only man of Presidium rank to put in an appearance. This was in keeping with the trend noted earlier at receptions given by the East Germans and Czechs, which only Molotov and Mikoyan attended.

11. On 4 June, the US Embassy in Moscow relayed a rumor that P. K. Ponomarenko had been appointed Central Committee Secretary to fill the vacancy created by Ignatiev's dismissal. 25X1

25X1 also believed that Kaftanov, the former USSR Minister of Higher Education, had taken Ponomarenko's place as Minister of Culture. 25X1

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Ponomarenko, as mentioned previously, was thought to be in the Malenkov camp. If this were true and if Ponomarenko had not been bought off in the interim, his return to the Secretariat, which he had vacated on 6 March, would seem to reflect favorably on Malenkov. Curiously enough, the example of the USSR cabinet, where former Party Secretary Ponomarenko had taken over the Ministry of Culture, had been followed at least in the Ukrainian, Moldavian and Karelo-Finnish cabinets. In each of these, the new Minister of Culture was drawn directly from the Party Secretariat or had formerly been associated with it. This procedure was par-

ticularly noteworthy because it occurred despite the fact that both A. M. Lazarev and I. I. Tsvetkov, the Moldavian and Karelo-Finnish officials, had been criticized in September 1952, while the status of K. Z. Litvin, the new Ukrainian Minister of Culture, had apparently been declining since 1950.

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13. On 23 May, the Soviet press published a curious article by the controversial economist, Varga, which appeared on the surface to be, like the Stalin Bolshevik article, purely propagandistic in tone. In effect, it represented another recantation on Varga's part of his 1947 position that in times of crisis the State could and would act contrary to the desires of the monopolies for maximum profits and in the interests of the bourgeoisie. Varga revised this stand and accepted Stalin's view that the monopolies had taken control of the State. Varga, however, was able to maintain at least by inference his 1947 theory that the expected (1948) post-war crisis would be a temporary one and that the serious cyclical crisis of capitalism would come perhaps ten years after the war. He did this in his statement regarding the coming market crisis, particularly as accentuated by the re-entry of Japan and Germany into world markets. This view, of course, was in complete conformity with Stalin's position. Western observers had been waiting for some clue as to the possibility of change in Soviet economic policy. Yet Varga's article restated the general estimate set forth by Stalin. It made a bid for the relaxation of COCOM controls, but this was certainly not unusual.